

KATHERINE SOLANO, MBA

MERCHANT & MARKETPLACE STRATEGY & OPERATIONS

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SUMMARY

Merchant and marketplace operator who built a two-sided hospitality platform supporting 60+ venue partners, 150K downloads, and approximately \$1M in transaction volume. Led partner onboarding, feedback loops, internal CRM tooling, monetization, and an AI voice concierge adopted by three venues. Turns recurring merchant pain points into scalable product and operational workflows through analytics, experimentation, and cross-functional execution.

EXPERIENCE

Founder & Marketplace Operator | ZONA

Oct 2023–Present

Miami, FL / New York, NY

- Built a two-sided hospitality marketplace from zero to 150K downloads, 60+ venue partners, 25%+ week-4 retention, approximately \$1M in transaction volume, and \$200K+ in revenue.
- Led a four-person cross-functional team across engineering, partner success, and marketing/operations. Owned product, partnerships, growth, monetization, and operations from initial concept through iOS and Android launch.
- Led the rollout of an AI voice concierge using Twilio, Claude, Deepgram, and Cartesia. Coordinated engineering and venue deployments from build through live launch, securing adoption by three venues for 24/7 guest support.
- Ran biweekly product pilots and feature releases, including affiliate programs, SMS automation, and tiered bottle-service pricing. Used early usage data to determine what scaled, changed, or was removed.
- Built the growth measurement framework using PostHog instrumentation, Firebase events, funnel dashboards, retention cohorts, and direct SQL queries across product and operational data.
- Sequenced launch as a private partner pilot before App Store release. Ran weekly venue check-ins and translated partner feedback into Jira sprint priorities, internal CRM tools, and partner-facing workflows.
- Designed two revenue surfaces: a transaction model with tiered pricing and a 50% deposit, and a partner advertising platform with venue-level reporting and click-through analytics. Monetization combined a 15-20% transaction commission, advertising, and venue partnerships.
- Implemented event-level tracking in Firebase and launched behavior-triggered push notifications, increasing daily active users by approximately 15%. Built funnel dashboards and retention cohorts to measure performance and guide iteration.
- Built the internal CRM and administrative tools used by operations to manage partner and marketplace workflows.

Operations Analytics Consultant | Policlínico El Bosque

Feb–May 2026

Lima, Peru

- Mapped patient and staff workflows through stakeholder interviews and operational data analysis; redesigned intake and scheduling to reduce average wait time from 20 to 10 minutes and no-shows from 20% to 12%.
- Interviewed clinic leadership, nurses, and front-desk staff to scope the redesign, then sequenced implementation in two phases to limit service disruption.
- Built leadership dashboards to monitor throughput, appointment reliability, and service bottlenecks and support ongoing operating decisions.

Data & Operations Consultant | SmartDealer Technologies, InDesign Data

Sep 2025–Jan 2026

Miami, FL

Automotive software and DMS data-integration platform serving dealerships and technology vendors

- Scoped a reconciliation review across 500K+ transaction records in a multi-vendor integration, identifying duplicate records, missing fields, and cross-system inconsistencies.

- Shipped validation logic that reduced data mismatches 25% and improved reporting workflows, cutting manual reporting time 40%.
- Queried dealer, vendor, and platform data directly using SQL to identify root causes and inform process and reporting fixes.

More consulting work & case studies: [Portfolio](#).

SELECTED STRATEGY & AI WORK

Product Manager, Team Lead IBM SkillsBuild AI Experiential Learning Lab <i>Remote</i>	Feb–May 2026
• Led a four-person team on Sentra, an AI runtime governance and oversight layer for autonomous agents. Defined the problem space, ran operator discovery, and prioritized rule-based risk scoring over alternative approaches. • Shipped an MVP with a monitoring pipeline and Streamlit dashboard for behavioral review, then submitted the working demo to IBM at program close.	
Product Manager, Team Lead NYU Berlin Global Intensive <i>Berlin, Germany</i>	Jun 2026
• Led the healthcare adaptation of Sentra, focused on validating AI-generated medication decisions against live patient data. The concept was selected as one of four finalist teams and presented with feedback from Google and Join Capital mentors.	

PROJECTS

Marketplace Pricing & Promotion Simulator Python, pandas, Streamlit <i>Independent project</i>	2026
• Built a contribution-margin simulator using 824K transaction line items to evaluate take rate, fulfillment costs, promotional funding, demand assumptions, promotion breakeven, and operating scenarios.	
Nonprofit Financial Health Dashboard Python, Streamlit, Form 990 data <i>Independent project</i>	2026
• Built a decision-support dashboard using public Form 990 filings to evaluate operating margins, reserves, leverage, revenue mix, compensation, and financial trends, with screening and peer-analysis views that separate reported data from derived measures.	
More projects & demos: github.com/ksolano220 .	

EDUCATION

New York University , M.S., Management & Analytics	Jun 2026
Pepperdine University , MBA	Dec 2023
Florida International University , B.A., Psychology	Jun 2017

CAPABILITIES & TOOLS

Merchant strategy & operations: onboarding, retention, partner experience, marketplace economics, pricing, pilots, process design, KPI frameworks, cross-functional execution | **Analytics & product:** SQL, Python, PostHog, Firebase, Jira, Figma, experimentation, funnel and cohort analysis | **Applied AI:** Claude, Twilio, Deepgram, Cartesia, voice automation